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Describes the intensive teacher-training program in elementary education at St. Rose. The program is conducted at the graduate level, with a total of 30 semester hours to be earned in a 4-summer-session sequence, or in a 2- or 3-summer sequence with additional courses pursued during the academic year. A series of seminars centered on specific areas of elementary education constitute the main core of the program. A demonstration school is operated by the college.

Upon successful completion of the first summer session, a student can be certified to teach in public elementary schools of New York State for 1 year. The 1-year certification is renewable to a maximum of five times. Permanent certification is granted if within a 6-year period a student completes the 30 required semester hours plus 2 years of successful teaching in public elementary schools of New York State.

To enter this program, students must meet the entrance requirements of the graduate division of the college.

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INTENSIVE TEACHER-TRAINING PROGRAM AT THE COLLEGE OF SAINT ROSE

By Sister Benita Daley, C.S.J.*

AN INVENTORY OF THE Intensive Teacher-Training Program in Elementary Education, conducted at the College of Saint Rose, Albany, New York, since the 1952 summer session, reveals the interesting fact that by August, 1959, 113 liberal arts college graduates had completed the program and earned master's degrees in elementary education. They are now teaching in the public schools of six States: New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, California, Virginia, Texas, and in the American schools for children of military personnel in France.

The college administration inaugurated this special graduate program in 1952 to aid in alleviating the critical teacher shortage. Knowing that the elementary-school population had been rapidly increasing since 1946 and believing that higher institutions should assist in this emergency, the college officials thought it possible to design a special graduate program to prepare liberal arts college graduates for elementary teaching.

In order to obtain factual information on which to plan such a program, the college investigated a potential supply of elementary teachers among its alumnae and the 1952 senior class, many of whom had earned a provisional certificate for secondary-school teaching. This survey proved conclusively that graduates whose previous education had been directed to various fields were interested in a so-called "conversion program" that would enable them to qualify for elementary certification.

ORGANIZATION OF PROGRAM

With the co-operation and assistance of the New York State Education Department, the College planned an experimental program on the graduate level to satisfy certification requirements. The total program required twenty-four semester hours in elementary education and six additional semester hours of graduate credit in any academic or professional field, or both. The required thirty semester

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hours could be earned in a four-summer-session sequence; or they could be taken in a two- or three-summer-session sequence with additional courses pursued during the academic year. The college offered an evening and Saturday schedule of classes to give students teaching in the Albany area an opportunity to bring problems based on classroom situations to their instructors for solution.

A series of seminars, centered on specific areas of elementary education, constituted the main core of the program. The seminar method of instruction fulfilled a threefold purpose: it enabled instructors to draw on the rich variety of liberal arts backgrounds of the students; it stimulated discussion; and it required students to utilize research techniques in their analysis of the best current thought and practice in elementary education. A pro-seminar offering training in methods of research was a prescribed feature of the program.

Seminars in child growth and development, elementary-school curriculum, and methods of teaching reading and the language arts comprised the first summer session of study. The need to acquire the essential understandings, attitudes, and skills requisite for the classroom teacher in a public school formed the underlying theme of the program.

In the second summer session, one seminar concentrated on methods of teaching the basic elementary subjects: the language arts, arithmetic, science, and citizenship education; the other, called a seminar in elementary-school teaching, was organized around problems students had encountered in their first year of teaching. The instructor requested each student to complete a questionnaire which listed classroom problems and areas of possible difficulty such as community relationships, interviews with parents, co-operation with school personnel, and the like. The data gleaned from this material constituted the nucleus of the seminar.

Public school superintendents, elementary-school principals, and supervisors assisted the college faculty in the organization and development of the program. The college co-ordinator of student teaching visited the graduate students in their public school classrooms to evaluate their teaching and to receive reports from school officials about their work.

In order to maintain unity and continuity in the acquisition of professional knowledge, the first two summer sessions of eight semester hours each were prescribed. The remaining fourteen hours

were elective. In the latter category, students were advised to select courses in psychology of learning, mental hygiene, philosophical foundations of education, and principles and history of education to develop a broad background for their teaching experience. A variety of liberal-cultural courses offered in the graduate division also afforded students further enrichment.

DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL

One of the most profitable features of the Saint Rose Intensive Teacher-Training Program was the demonstration school, operated by the college in the summer session to furnish prospective teachers with an opportunity to observe and participate in elementary teaching. From eighty to ninety children in kindergarten and the first six grades attended the school each summer. Their classroom teachers, all highly experienced and outstanding in their public school systems for their competency, worked in close co-operation with the college faculty to provide a model elementary-school program. No remedial work entered into the plans. Hence, children needing that type of teaching were not accepted in the demonstration school. The whole organization of the classes simulated a typical school day. Themes appealing to children characterized the lessons and activities of each class. Project work featured such high avenues of interest as "Circus Time," "Life in Mexico," and "Indians of the United States."

The prospective teachers spent a period of observation in the demonstration school each day. Gradually they began participation in various classroom assignments. Under the direction of the college instructors, they finally prepared and taught a set of lessons to groups of the children. Later an evaluation of their teaching performance by both the teachers in the demonstration school and their instructors helped the students to develop confidence and poise in their teaching.

PROCESS OF CERTIFICATION

Graduate students who completed successfully the first summer session of the program received from the New York State Education Department a certificate to teach in the public elementary schools of New York State. This certificate was valid for one year. Upon completion of the second summer session of study and evidence of

satisfactory teaching, the certificate was renewed for an additional year. A maximum of five one-year renewals was available to candidates. To be eligible for permanent certification, the holder of a temporary certificate had to complete, within a six-year period, not only the required thirty semester hours but also two years of successful teaching in the public elementary schools of New York State. A student was recommended to the State Education Department for permanent certification only after the principal certified that the student's teaching was satisfactory.

Some excerpts from the statements of these public school officials afford an interesting commentary on the actual working of the program. One principal wrote about a teacher in the program: "Her understanding of children, enthusiasm for teaching, and all around performance of duty are outstanding. We consider her one of our best faculty members."

Another stated about another teacher:

> She is interested in her pupils, aware of their needs, and tries to fit her work to meet them. She gets along well with parents and teachers and co-operates with supervisors. I think she is worthy of a teaching position.

A third explained the work of a first-grade teacher:

> She has taught first grade in this school for two years. She comes well-prepared in her work, maintains fine discipline, and has a real understanding of children and their problems. She has contributed to the establishment of a fine relationship between the students, their homes and the school.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Applicants for admission to the Intensive Teacher-Training Program had to meet the entrance requirements of the graduate division of the college. Hence students selected for this project held a bachelor's degree from a college accredited by its own regional association and presented satisfactory evidence of ability to pursue advanced study and research. The student's score on the Aptitude Test of the Graduate Record Examinations indicated the student's general scholastic ability. The confidential file from the student's undergraduate college offered further information on the aptitudes, achievement, and experience of the applicant. A personal interview

with the college admission officers afforded an opportunity to evaluate the desirable personal qualifications for elementary teaching. Two factors in this evaluation were deemed essential: emotional stability and a basic interest in the welfare of children.

INVENTORY OF STUDENTS

The data assembled in the inventory of the Saint Rose program shows that 213 graduates of 51 different colleges and universities enrolled during the 1952-1959 period. Their liberal arts backgrounds represented 25 fields with 6 predominating: English, commerce, social studies, music, sociology and French. In this group, 174 students had done practice teaching on the secondary-school level or had taught high school regularly. The remaining 39 had worked with children in camps, social agencies, church schools or on playgrounds.

As noted previously, 113 of the entire group completed the program by August, 1959, while 60 are now teaching in public schools and continuing their training in 1959-60. The program then has demonstrated its ability to produce a new source of supply to meet teacher shortages in the elementary schools.

Of the 40 students who discontinued the program after completing one summer session, 20 did so because of marriage and maternity; 6 entered secondary-school teaching; 11 withdrew because of residential relocation, and the remaining 3 began preparation for business school careers.

Since 81 per cent of the total enrollment entered public school teaching, the College of Saint Rose believes that the time, effort, and expense involved in training these teachers constituted a worthwhile project in teacher education.

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The Bureau of Information of the National Catholic Welfare Conference has released a book, entitled The Church and Communications Arts, *which is a report on the first NCWC Communications Seminar, held last August at Manhattan College.*

* * *

The twenty-first annual North American Liturgical Week will be held in Pittsburgh from August 22 to 25.